

BRUNO AND CAMPANELLA.

THE Italian Government has permitted the erection of a monument to Giordano Bruno in the capital of the Christian world. We understand that the work is sufficiently artistic to bring no great discredit on the mistress of the fine arts; but, since its sole reason for existence is based on an insecure foundation, we are not surprised that the details of its design are not all true to history. It has been erected only because of the presumed fact that Bruno was done to death by the Papal authorities. To render it more impressive, and to illustrate the eventful career of its subject, it presents to our contemplation some bas-reliefs of other alleged "martyrs to truth," such as Huss, Servetus, Arnold of Brescia, and Campanella.

Now it is by no means certain that Bruno was put to death. We know that in 1592 he was arrested by the State Inquisitors of Venice on the charge of heresy;* that after six years of imprisonment he

* His denouncer, Giovanni Mocenigo, to whom he had taught his system of artificial memory, accused Bruno of styling the Trinity an absurdity; of calling Transubstantiation a blasphemy, and of finding truth in no religious system. He had said that Christ seduced the Jews, that he died unwillingly, and that the apostles worked no miracles. According to him, there is no distinction of Persons in God. The words are infinite and eternal. There is no punishment for sin; the soul,

was delivered to the Holy Office, or Roman Inquisition, tried, (and perhaps) condemned to the stake on February 9, 1600. But was the sentence executed, or, as frequently happened in similar cases, was Bruno burnt merely in effigy? A letter purporting to be from an erudite German then in Rome, Gaspar Schopp,* describes the execution, but many good critics have denied the authenticity of this epistle. Again, Schopp is alone in his assertion. The Vatican Archives contain documents of the trial, but not of the condemnation, nor is there any account of the execution; whereas, in every similar case, both of these are detailed. Again, the "Relations" of the foreign ambassadors resident at the Holy See, which never omitted any such items, say nothing of this event. Not even in the correspondence of the Venetian Ambassador, the agent of that Government which must have felt

produced by nature, passes to another creature. This world shows no true religion; the Catholic is the best, but it needs a reformation; and he (Bruno) will effect this with the aid of the King of Navarre, (Henry IV.)

* Convinced of his errors by the study of Baronio's "Annals," this Lutheran scholar became a Catholic. Invited to Rome by Clement VIII., he wrote many pamphlets in defence of Catholicism, the Papacy, etc. But he was very litigious, and was given to paradoxes. In his presumed letter he says of Bruno's errors: "The Inquisition did not impute Lutheran doctrines to him. He was charged with having compared the Holy Ghost to the soul of the world; Moses, the prophets, the apostles, and even Christ, to the pagan hierophants. He admitted many Adams and many Hercules. He believed in magic, or at least he upheld it, and taught that Moses and Christ practised it. Whatever errors have been

an especial interest in the fate of Bruno, since it had initiated his downfall, do we find any allusion to the alleged catastrophe.*

Cantù cites a MS. of the Medicean Archives (No. 1608), dated at Rome on the very day of Bruno's trial, which narrates the burning of an apostate friar a few days before. Here some mention of Bruno's condemnation would naturally occur, but there is not a word. Finally, the celebrated Servite, Friar Paul Sarpi, who never missed an opportunity of attacking what he feigned to regard as Roman intolerance, Roman treachery, etc., although he continued this course for many years after the trial of Bruno,† and although his own position of antagonism with the Roman *Curia* perforce kept him on the lookout for instances which might inculpate Rome and justify the recent rebellious conduct of Venice toward the Holy See, never alludes to the alleged fate of Bruno. The same silence is found in Ciacconio, Sandrini, Alfani, Manno, and Ossat, all of whom would scarcely have omitted to notice

taught by the ancient pagans or by the most recent heretics were all advanced by this Bruno." (Cantù, "Illustri Italiani," art. "Bruno.")

* The "Relations" of the Venetian ambassadors to the home government are rightly regarded by historians as the most precious, both for detail and accuracy, of all available sources for a knowledge of the events of the time.

† As late as December 6, 1611, we find Sarpi describing the execution at Rome (by strangling) of the French Abbé Dubois, for libels against the Jesuits, and claiming that the unfortunate had received a safe-conduct before journeying to Rome. At the same time he greatly decries Schopp, whom he describes as "meriting a greater punishment than burning in effigy."

so important an event, had it really occurred. And how is it that the “Martyrology” of the Protestants is also silent on this matter? Truly, Bruno was less a Protestant Christian than he was a Buddhist; but in those days, as in our own, any person of Christian ancestry who antagonized Rome, and did not avow himself a Jew or a pagan, was claimed for their own by the Protestants.*

The Bruno monument places Huss, Arnold of Brescia, Servetus, and Campanella, in the same category with the Philosopher of Nola. There may be some general reason for so treating the Bohemian fanatic and the cut-throat of Brescia. The comparison of Bruno with Servetus, the victim of Calvin, may be tolerated, with a smile at the designer’s ungrateful disregard of the feelings of Protestants. But Campanella and Bruno! “Hyperion to a satyr!” Bruno was a Christian only by baptism; Campanella was ever a devout Catholic. Campanella, a martyr to science! His devotion to science caused him no trouble more annoying than some cloister squabbles; politics, mere politics, involved him in serious difficulty. As well ascribe the fate of Savonarola to his zeal for morals. Campanella, a victim of the Inquisition! His only relations with that tribunal came from its interposition to save him from the Neapolitan courts, which would have consigned him to the scaffold for high treason to the Spanish crown.

* See Appendix for later information on Bruno’s execution.

Campanella was born at Stilo, in the kingdom of Naples, in 1568. At the age of fourteen he entered the Dominican Order, and in the course of time became very distinguished in the public disputes on philosophical questions, which were then the fashion of the day in Italy. But his attacks on the peripatetics* procured him many enemies in his own Order, and in 1590 he sought the protection of the Marquis Lavello, one of his Neapolitan admirers. During the next eight years we find him disputing at Rome and Florence, and teaching in the Universities of Pisa and Padua. In 1598 he returned to Stilo, and it was soon rumored that he was occupied in projects for the subversion of the Spanish domination. He frequently preached, and wrote that the year 1600 would unfold great changes in the kingdom; that recent extraordinary inundations, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, prognosticated a coming reformation in both civil and ecclesiastical matters; that he was to be an instrument of Providence in all this, for he “was born to abolish three great evils—tyranny, sophism, and hypocrisy; everything was in darkness when

* “Italy produced the first school of philosophy of a modern character; for the school of Telesius soon followed that of the platonist Marsilio Ficino, and that of the peripatetic Pomponazzi. . . . How is it that the names of Campanella and Bacon are so diversely regarded: the latter as of one who opened the modern era, and the former scarcely remembered? Campanella devoted himself to all the knowable; Bacon confined himself to the natural sciences.” Cantù, “Filosofia Moderna,” §i.

he struck the light.” * He reasoned on several recent astronomical discoveries, and announced that his studies showed him the near advent of the reign of eternal reason in the life of humanity. † Great revolutions, he said, occur every eight centuries, the latest previous one having been the Incarnation of the World.

Whether Campanella was the instigator or a tool was never made known; but a conspiracy was formed against Spanish rule, and four bishops and three hundred friars of various orders were the leading spirits. Of the three processes of the trial now extant, one tends to show that the design was to establish a republic in Calabria; the second insists that the kingdom was to be given to the Holy See; and the third indicates a wish to hand the country over to the Turks; but it is noteworthy that in the process finally extended in the Holy Office at Rome nearly all the previous witnesses retracted. When the conspiracy was discovered the viceroy’s forces captured nearly all the leaders. Thelaics were hung, and the “*privilegium fori*” consigned the ecclesiastics, Campanella excepted, to the Inquisition; ‡ the viceroy insisting on this exception, probably at the instigation of Campa-

* “Poesie Filosofiche.”

† “De Sensu Rerum et Magia,” iv, 20.

‡ Writing to Cardinal Farnese, Campanella says that his clerical comrades pleaded guilty to the charge of “rebelling in order to be free to become heretics.” Had they answered only to the charge of treason, he says, “all would have been executed, without any appeal to the Pope.”

nella's private enemies. Confined in Castel Sant' Elmo for twenty-seven years, the Holy See again and again vainly endeavored to procure his release; but Pope Paul V., who sent Schopp to Naples for that purpose, succeeded in obtaining permission for him to correspond with his friends, and to receive every convenience for literary work. Finally, Pope Urban VIII. availed himself of the accusation of magical practices made against the philosopher, insisting that such a charge placed the case within the sole jurisdiction of the Inquisition; and he succeeded in obtaining the friar's extradition.

Campanella was at once enrolled in the Papal household, and an annual pension was assigned to him. Caressed by all that was learned in Rome, he passed several years in happy study; but in 1634 the Spanish residents, who continued to detest his name, made an open attack on the French Embassy where he was visiting, and tried to obtain possession of his person. He was saved by the Papal police, but by the advice of the Pontiff he at once betook himself to France. Cardinal Richelieu received him with open arms, and made him a counsellor of state. He was also elected president of the French Academy, lately founded by Richelieu. To the day of his death, on May 21, 1639, he continually corresponded with Pope Urban VIII. What is there in this career to indicate the martyr to science, the victim of papal tyranny; in fine, the fit companion of Bruno as that unfortunate receives the ignorant or diabolic homage of so-called liberalism?

We have said that Bruno is wrongly styled a Protestant. We never find him representing himself as either Calvinist, Anglican, or Lutheran. While he resided in Geneva, the headquarters of Calvinism, he attended, he says, “the sermons of the Italian and French religionists. But when I was warned that I could not remain there long if I did not adopt the creed of the Genevans, I went to Toulouse.” He stayed but a short time in Toulouse, “the Rome of the Garronne,” only long enough to receive the doctor’s cap, and to surprise both the Catholics and the Calvinists by his teachings. The year 1579 found him at Paris, satisfying Henry III. that his phenomenal memory was not the effect of magic, and lecturing at the Sorbonne. As yet no sign of Calvinism. During the three years that he spent in England he greatly lauded Queen Elizabeth, “the unique Diana, who is to us all what the sun is to the stars,” but he manifested no leaning to Anglicanism. At Oxford he taught the movement of the earth; and was obliged to depart. Arriving in Germany, he was well received at Wittenberg, and he highly appreciated the toleration accorded by the Lutheran professors to him, “although of a different faith.”* In fact, Bruno taught everywhere the Pythagorean system of the world, and an Eleatic pantheism dressed in Neo-Platonic forms, advancing both with a pride, or rather a vanity, which must have appeared ridiculous.

* “Non vestræ religionis dogmate probatum.” Thus in his work, “*De lampade combinatoria*.”

He announced himself to the Oxford dons as "doctor of the most elaborate philosophy; professor of the purest and most harmless wisdom; recognized by all the principal Academies of Europe; unknown only to barbarians; the weaker-ener of sleeping geniuses; the tamer of presumptuous and recalcitrant ignorance; a universal philanthropist, as all his actions proclaim. One who loves an Italian no more than an Englishman, a man no more than a woman, a mitre no more than a crown, a lawyer no more than a soldier, the hooded no more than the hoodless; but who loves him the most whose conversation is the most peaceful, civil, and useful; one who cares not for an anointed head, or marked forehead, or clean hands, but only for the mind and for the cultured intellect; one who is detested by hypocrites and by the propagators of insanity, but who is revered by the upright, and applauded by every noble genius." Could Cagliostro have excelled this as an advertisement?

But if Bruno was neither Catholic nor Protestant, his forced associate in the Roman monument was a profound Catholic, albeit an exceedingly intolerant one. He would have no dispute with an innovator. He would ask: "Who sent you to preach, God or the devil? If God, prove it by miracles." And if he fails, said Campanella, "burn him if you can. . . . The first error committed (during the Lutheran movement) was in allowing Luther to live after the Diets of Worms and Augsburg; and if Charles V. did so, as they

say, in order to keep the Pope in apprehension, and thus oblige him to succor Charles in his aspirations to universal monarchy, he acted against every reason of state policy; for to weaken the Pontiff is to weaken all Christianity, the people soon revolting under pretext of freedom of conscience.”* He counselled the King of Spain to have always two or three religions—Dominicans, Jesuits, or Franciscans,—in his supreme council; and every commanding general, he said, should have a religious adviser.† Such sentiments must sound strange to the *Italianissimi* of to-day; but they came naturally from Campanella, who thought that “the same constellation which drew fetid effluvia from the cadaverous minds of heretics, brought forth balsamic exhalations from the exact minds of the founders of the Minims, Jesuits, Capuchins, etc.”‡ He advises all Governments to allow no Lutherans within their limits; because, he contends, these sectarians deny the free-will of man, and can excuse crime by the plea that they are fated to sin.§ As for the Calvinist dogma of predestination, “it renders all princes wicked, the people seditious, and theologians traitors.”||

The following passage, ¶ if read by the committee before it accepted Ferrari’s design for Bruno’s

* “Civitas Solis,” c. 27.—“Della Monarchia Spagnuola,” c. 27.

† “Aforismi Politici,” *passim*.

‡ Idem, 70.

§ Idem, 84, 87.

|| “Lettere,” *passim*.

¶ “Discorso II. sul Papato.”

statue, would probably have caused its rejection: "The Papacy belongs to no one in particular, but to all Christendom, and whatever the Church possesses is common to all. The Italians ought to encourage the wealth of religious corporations, because it belongs to them all, and lessens the strength of Italy's rivals. . . . No Italian sovereign should aspire to a rule over the others, but all, whenever the direct line of succession becomes extinct, should proclaim the Roman Church heir to their dominions. Thus in course of time an Italian monarchy would be established. The Italian republics ought to make a law that whenever they fall under the rule of tyrants their government devolves on the Roman Church."

In reality, Campanella aimed at a reformation of the world, and by means of Catholicism. His enthusiasm descried a near conversion of the nations, as prophesied by St. Bridget of Sweden, the Abbot Joachim, Dionysius the Carthusian, St. Vincent Ferrer, and St. Catherine of Siena, the last of whom had predicted that the sons of St. Dominic would carry the olive of peace to the Turks.* He declared that the day of Antichrist was near, if not already come,—"it is now here, or will come in 1630;" and he "was born to combat the schools of Antichrist," which schools were everywhere active; for "where Mohammed and Luther do not rule, there dominate Machiavelli and politicians."†

*Campanella's words as given in a contemporary account of the Calabrese conspiracy, published in 1845 by Capialbi.—Cantù, "Illustri Italiani," art. "Campanella."

† "Letter to the Pope and Cardinals."